United Nations E/ICEF/2018/18

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
19 June 2018

Original: English
English, French and Spanish only

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board

Compendium of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its annual session of 2018

Decision		*Page*
Annual session, 11–14 June 2018		
2018/5	Country programme documents	2
2018/6	Extensions of ongoing country programmes	2
2018/7	Annual report for 2017 of the Executive Director of UNICEF	2
2018/8	Update on UNICEF actions on strengthening protections (a) against sexual exploitation and abuse and (b) against workplace sexual harassment	4
2018/9	Annual report on UNICEF humanitarian action	4
2018/10	Evaluation reports and management responses and revised evaluation policy of UNICEF	5
2018/11	Report of the Ethics Office of UNICEF for 2017	6
2018/12	Office of Internal Audit and Investigations 2017 annual report to the Executive Board	6

18-10020 (E) 120718

Please recycle

2018/5
Country programme documents

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* that the country programme documents, including aggregate indicative budgets, for Kenya, Malawi and Rwanda (E/ICEF/2018/P/L.4–E/ICEF/2018/P/L.6) were made available to Member States for their comments and input from 16 March to 5 April 2018, in accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/1 on modifications to procedures for consideration and approval of country programme documentation;

2. *Approves* on a no-objection basis, and in accordance with decision 2014/1, the country programme documents, including aggregate indicative budgets, for Kenya, Malawi and Rwanda (E/ICEF/2018/P/L.4–E/ICEF/2018/P/L.6).

Annual session
12 June 2018

2018/6
Extensions of ongoing country programmes

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the one-year extensions of the country programmes for Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Congo, Cuba, Mexico and Sierra Leone, which were approved by the Executive Director and are presented in table 1 of document E/ICEF/2018/P/L.7;

2. *Approves* the one-year extension of the country programme for the Syrian Arab Republic, following a previous one-year extension, as presented in table 2 of document E/ICEF/2018/P/L.7.

Annual session
11 June 2018

2018/7
Annual report for 2017 of the Executive Director of UNICEF

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual report for 2017 of the Executive Director of UNICEF (E/ICEF/2018/9), including the report on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and achievements against the Integrated Results and Resources Framework of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2014–2017 (E/ICEF/2018/9/Add.1), the annex on UNICEF implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, 2017 and the data companion and scorecard;

2. *Also takes note* of the UNICEF report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (E/ICEF/2018/11);

3. *Decides* to transmit the above-mentioned reports to the Economic and Social Council, along with a summary of the comments and guidance of the Executive Board;

4. *Recognizes* the inter-agency efforts being made to advance the common chapter and requests UNICEF to continue consultations with the United Nations funds and programmes on the harmonized format for common chapter reporting;

5. *Welcomes* the mentioning of the common chapter in the annual report and asks UNICEF to report on the status of the implementation of the common chapter, starting with the annual report for 2018 of the Executive Director, and to present the findings at the joint meeting of the Executive Boards and at the annual session;

6. *Requests* UNICEF to continue to engage with the Secretary-General, other United Nations development system entities and Member States with a view to supporting the full implementation of General Assembly resolutions 71/243 and 72/279, including its contribution to a smooth transition and business continuity of the resident coordinator system;

7. *Also requests* UNICEF, as a United Nations development system entity, to engage closely with the Secretary-General and Member States to support the preparation of a well-thought-out implementation plan for the inception of the reinvigorated resident coordinator system, including on the operationalization of its funding arrangements, to be presented to the General Assembly;

8. *Further requests* UNICEF to present a preliminary analysis of the financial and other implications of resolution 72/279 for UNICEF to the Executive Board at its second regular session in 2018;

9. *Requests* UNICEF, in accordance with resolution 72/279, to provide its contribution to the adequate, predictable and sustainable funding of the resident coordinator system, in line with the forthcoming implementation plan for the inception of the reinvigorated resident coordinator system to be presented to the General Assembly, on an annual basis starting 1 January 2019;

10. *Recalls* Executive Board decision 2017/14 to improve future structured dialogues on financing and to present a proposal to the Executive Board no later than the second regular session of 2018 on how it plans to use the structured dialogue on financing as a tool to improve the quality and transparency of funding and to better match resources to the outcomes of the Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, and encourages UNICEF to provide in advance an overview of funding gaps in relation to the implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, taking into account both regular and other resources;

11. *Welcomes* the UNICEF Executive Director's commitment to implementing resolutions 71/243 and 72/279 and in this regard encourages the secretariat of the Executive Board of UNICEF to work together with the secretariats of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the World Food Programme to produce a joint response to the joint meeting of the Executive Boards segment on working methods by no later than four weeks before the second regular session 2018, allowing for a consultation process among Member States ahead of that session of 2018;

12. *Encourages* the secretariat of the Executive Board of UNICEF to continue pursuing ways to improve the working methods of the Executive Board and to generate additional cost savings, including in the preparation of formal Executive Board documents in compliance with the rules on the official and working languages of UNICEF, and decides to consider the number of yearly field visits of the Executive Board of UNICEF at the September Board session 2018.

Annual session
13 June 2018

2018/8
Update on UNICEF actions on strengthening protections (a) against sexual exploitation and abuse and (b) against workplace sexual harassment

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the Executive Director's zero tolerance of both sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, and appreciates the actions that UNICEF has taken so far to prevent and manage sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, implement further institutional and cultural changes and ensure a joined-up, system-wide, coherent approach;

2. *Also takes note with appreciation* of the independent evaluation that UNICEF is undertaking of its policies and processes on tackling sexual exploitation and abuse and the Independent Task Force on workplace gender discrimination and harassment, and requests UNICEF to present the evaluation and Task Force reports and associated management responses to the Executive Board;

3. *Requests* UNICEF management, as required under the Secretary-General's report on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, to present its annual certification to the Executive Board at each annual session, to cover sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment, as appropriate, complementing and strengthening its existing reporting, and to provide updates on progress made in that regard, including working with the office of the Victims' Rights Advocate for the United Nations, and further urges UNICEF to consider how to align reporting formats and content with other agencies, where appropriate;

4. *Encourages* the Bureau of the Executive Board of UNICEF to consider the possibility of discussing the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse of beneficiaries and sexual harassment in the workplace at the joint meeting of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Office for Project Services, UNICEF, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the World Food Programme in order to increase the efficiency of the Boards and avoid duplication.

Annual session
14 June 2018

2018/9
Annual report on UNICEF humanitarian action

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual report on UNICEF humanitarian action (E/ICEF/2018/10);

2. *Welcomes* the increase in dialogue between the UNICEF secretariat and the Executive Board on the critical work of UNICEF in humanitarian action, including through the delivery of the first annual report on UNICEF humanitarian action;

3. *Requests* that future annual reports on UNICEF humanitarian action reflect the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, where humanitarian action is mainstreamed in each Goal Area and is a cross-cutting theme, and the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action, and also requests UNICEF to reflect progress achieved in all geographic regions in a more inclusive manner in subsequent reports.

Annual session
12 June 2018

2018/10
Evaluation reports and management responses and revised evaluation policy of UNICEF

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual report for 2017 on the evaluation function in UNICEF (E/ICEF/2018/15);

2. *Welcomes* the good progress on evaluation of UNICEF activities, but notes with concern that spending on evaluation as a percentage of total programme expenditure decreased in 2017 and has consistently failed over recent years to reach the target of 1 per cent of programme expenditure as set out in the UNICEF evaluation policy and emphasized in previous Executive Board decisions, and therefore requests UNICEF to reach the target by the end of 2019;

3. *Notes* that the thematic distribution of evaluations in the period 2014–2016 shows a sharp drop in the number of sector-specific evaluations for education and child protection, and calls on UNICEF to ensure a stable delivery rate;

4. *Welcomes* the improvement in the evaluation coverage of cross-cutting themes, and requests UNICEF to include gender equality as a cross-cutting theme in all evaluations and to increase the coverage rate of humanitarian action to one that better reflects the current overall spending of UNICEF in contexts of conflicts and crises;

5. *Takes note* of the reported number of evaluations submitted per region, and requests UNICEF, for especially those regions with the largest programme expenses, to significantly increase evaluation coverage;

6. *Requests* that future annual reports be structured around the Strategic Plan, 2018–2021 (policy areas and spending) and the revised evaluation policy of UNICEF;

7. *Recalls* its decision 2018/2, and takes note of the importance of joint evaluations with other entities, including joint evaluation of the common chapter of the strategic plans of the funds and programmes, and calls on the Evaluation Office and UNICEF to brief the Executive Board at its second regular session of 2018 on planning for this joint evaluation as part of its contribution to broader collaboration on joint evaluations of system-wide activities and to the function of system-wide independent evaluation measures;

8. *Takes note* of the evaluation of UNICEF strategies and programmes to reduce stunting in children under 5 years of age and its executive summary (E/ICEF/2018/16), looks forward to the implementation of the actions described in the management response, and requests an update on the implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation at the annual session of the Executive Board in 2019;

9. *Welcomes* the final proposal for the revised evaluation policy of UNICEF (E/ICEF/2018/14);

10. *Also welcomes* the open and constructive collaboration with Member States in the development of the revised evaluation policy;

11. *Requests* UNICEF to fully implement consistently the revised evaluation policy across all areas of the organization, including different policy areas at headquarters and at the field level, including capacity-building at the country and programme levels;

12. *Endorses* the revised evaluation policy.

Annual session
13 June 2018

2018/11
Report of the Ethics Office of UNICEF for 2017

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Ethics Office of UNICEF for 2017 (E/ICEF/2018/13);

2. *Appreciates* the successful outreach activities of the Ethics Office of UNICEF, which led to an enormous increase in the number of requests in 2017, and welcomes the results of the innovative Ethics Dialogue Facilitator Model, raising awareness of ethics and integrity organization-wide through facilitators and with limited resources;

3. *Requests* the Ethics Office to engage proactively in the implementation and coordination of actions against sexual exploitation and abuse of beneficiaries and sexual harassment in the workplace, in accordance with its mandate, and also requests the Ethics Office to provide dedicated and more-detailed reporting on its activities against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment in its future reports;

4. *Recalls* that the Ethics Office views the operationalization of the UNICEF Child Safeguarding Policy as unfinished business, and in this regard requests the Ethics Office to provide an assessment in its 2019 annual report on progress, challenges and recommendations for improvements;

5. *Also recalls* that the Ethics Office views that there is an absence of an established policy of when, how and in what format it should be consulted on matters of ethics standard-setting and policy support, and in this regard requests the Ethics Office and management to formalize this policy, to be set out in the 2019 annual report of the Ethics Office of UNICEF;

6. *Requests* UNICEF to conduct an assessment of the level of resources provided to the Ethics Office, with a view to ensuring that the Office has the necessary resources to fulfil its mandate;

7. *Also requests* UNICEF to provide a separate management response to the key findings and recommendations of the annual report of the Ethics Office, and to submit this report to the Executive Board, along with the annual report of the Ethics Office, starting with the annual session of 2019;

8. *Further requests* UNICEF to share a summary of the results and recommendations of the Global Staff Survey 2017 with the Executive Board, and calls upon UNICEF to take appropriate and effective steps to further improve the speak-up culture within the organization.

Annual session
13 June 2018

2018/12
Office of Internal Audit and Investigations 2017 annual report to the Executive Board

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the UNICEF Office of Internal Audit and Investigations 2017 annual report to the Executive Board (E/ICEF/2018/AB/L.2), including the overall assurance opinion of the adequacy and effectiveness of the organization's framework of governance, risk management and control, and encourages the Office to continue to develop the accompanying rationale to aid the Board's understanding of the functioning of key processes;

2. *Welcomes* the supporting analysis for the assurance opinion of the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations, and also welcomes the progress made to develop and implement the Office's strategic road map, and requests the Office to include reporting against further key performance indicators related to their work in future annual reports, starting with the report to be presented at the annual session of the Executive Board in 2019;

3. *Requests* the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations to provide more-detailed analysis of cases of sexual exploitation and abuse of beneficiaries and sexual harassment in the workplace in accordance with its mandate, including allegations, investigations and actions taken, in its 2018 annual report to the Executive Board;

4. *Recalls* that the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations, in its annual report, confirms that it will conduct work in 2018 to provide assurance that a coherent and effective approach to child protection and safeguarding is successfully embedded in and mainstreamed across UNICEF, and in this regard, requests that (a) the Office, in its assessment and assurance, make specific recommendations for improvements in the approach and policies of UNICEF, as appropriate; and (b) the Office and management develop a system for monitoring progress against key performance indicators, to be reported on in future annual reports of the Office;

5. *Welcomes* the Office's increased focus on key risk areas, the increasing number of internal audits of offices operating in complex humanitarian situations and the efforts to reduce the turnover time of reports to provide timely information to stakeholders;

6. *Takes note* of the Office's plans to undertake an external quality assessment of its audit and investigation teams, and asks the Office to include a summary of its findings and details of progress in implementing its recommendations in its next annual report;

7. *Also takes note* of the fact that no internal audit reports were rated adverse, but also of the decrease in reports rated satisfactory and the increase in reports rated strongly qualified, and encourages UNICEF to continue to develop quality;

8. *Further takes note* of the actions reported in response to the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations 2016 annual report and Executive Board decision 2017/10, and requests an update on the implementation of actions in response to the Office's 2017 annual report at the annual session of the UNICEF Executive Board in 2019;

9. *Takes note* of the decreased implementation rate of audit recommendations in 2017 compared with 2016, and encourages UNICEF management to implement outstanding audit recommendations and to ensure appropriate follow-up of key improvement areas, such as risk management, the management of implementing partners, fraud risk management and safeguarding, and to update the Executive Board at its annual session in June 2019;

10. *Welcomes* the efforts to minimize the number of actions outstanding for more than 18 months;

11. *Takes note* of the recommendations made to management by the Audit Advisory Committee, and encourages management to consider all recommendations by the Committee;

12. *Welcomes* the implementation of an anti-fraud strategy, and requests the Office to include in future annual reports an analysis of the channels by which allegations of fraud and other misconduct are detected or reported to the Office;

13. *Notes with concern* the consistently low level of recovery of defrauded funds, in particular with regard to third parties, and reiterates its call for management to do all that it can to ensure the timely recovery of any potential loss in investigated cases, and requests UNICEF management to provide, in future management responses, details, broken down by calendar year, of aggregate losses over prior years and cumulative recoveries to date against each year's losses;

14. *Notes with appreciation* that the Office reports that it was allocated appropriate and sufficient resources in 2017, and requests UNICEF to continue to allocate sufficient resources for the Office to ensure a satisfactory number of internal audits and investigations each year;

15. *Requests* UNICEF to continue to focus efforts on improving investigation timelines, noting the increasing number of cases pending for investigation from year to year.

Annual session
13 June 2018